



NEWS FROM THE SCIENTIFIC DIRECTOR, NIEHS

March, 1999

Contents of this Issue

- 1. Thank you from NTA
- 2. Professional Liability Insurance Coverage
- 3. Applications for AIDS Research Projects
- 4. Loan Repayment Programs
- 5. Visa Time Requirements
- 6. Conference Room Scheduler Changes
- 7. Breast/Prostate Faculty Meeting
- 8. NTP Nomination Faculty News
- 9. TIP Program
- 10. Vacancies/Recruits

THANK YOU FROM NTA—Arti Patel

I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for volunteering to be a part of the FRONTLINE Forum and for supporting the NTA's activities. The FRONTLINE Forum series will provide trainees with an opportunity to learn about different aspects of career development and planning from PIs who have had experience in different areas, such as "what happens at a study section meeting" or "how to obtain a position in academia." We hope that this series will help to supplement the mentoring trainees receive from their principal advisors. Most of you indicated areas that you would be willing to discuss with the trainees. This list will be given to the chairperson for the FRONTLINE Forum Committee, which we are in the process of organizing, and you will be contacted in the near future.

PROFESSIONAL LIABILITY INSURANCE PROGRAMS

Professional liability insurance for federal employees was developed with the advice and consultation of attorneys in the Tort Claims Division of the U. S. Department of Justice. It was developed specifically to meet the needs of federal managers and employees. For an annual premium of less than \$300, the plan provides the following benefits:

Professional liability coverage with limits of \$500,000 or \$1,000,000 for judgments arising from acts, errors or omissions committed by the insured while acting within the scope of employment.

- Protection against judgments involving personal injury, bodily injury and property damage arising within the scope of employment.
- Payment of legal defense costs, even against groundless or fraudulent suits is covered.
- This coverage is in addition to the liability coverage and is without limitation. Where allowed by state law, punitive damages up to the policy limit are paid.
- Protection against claims that existed before the effective date of coverage is provided so long as the insured had no knowledge of the claim.
- This coverage applies whether or not the Justice Department participates in the defense of the insured.

- Separate and distinct from the above, up to \$100,000 per incident is available to pay the costs of legal defense during disciplinary or criminal proceedings for acts committed or alleged which occurred within the employee's scope of employment. This includes allegations of misconduct arising from employment, being the subject of an IG, OSC or related investigation or being named as an RMO in an EEO complaint. Coverage is provided for internal agency disciplinary proceedings, criminal proceedings and judicial sanctions and for any monetary fine or penalty up to the policy limit.

If you are interested in obtaining more information on the professional liability insurance offered by Wright & Co., contact them at 202/842-3894 or 1-888-41-CSEBA. Requests for information can be faxed to 202/289-1399.

In addition, information can be found on Wright & Co.'s website at www.wrightandco.com <http://www.wrightandco.com>. For your convenience, an application for professional liability coverage with premium costs, and coverage and payment options follows.

CSEBA Professional Liability Insurance

Name: _____

Street Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Home Telephone: _____ E-mail: _____

Work Telephone: _____ Social Security No.: _____

Date of Birth: _____

Agency: _____

I hereby wish to enroll in the Wright & Co./CSEBA Professional Liability Insurance Policy for which I am eligible. I also attest that, as of this date, I have no knowledge of any allegation, claim or suit, or any act, error or omission which might reasonably be expected to result in a claim or suit.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Level of Coverage (Circle Option A or Option B)

	annual	semi-ann.	qtrly
Option A:	payment	payment	payment
\$1 million	266.00	133.00	66.50
administrative fee	26.00	13.00	6.50
TOTAL DUE:	292.00	146.00	73.00

Option B:			
\$500,000	203.00	101.50	50.75
administrative fee	26.00	13.00	6.50
TOTAL DUE:	229.00	114.50	57.25

Select Payment Method: (Circle the appropriate option)

Send me a bill: Annually Semi-annually Quarterly

My first premium payment is enclosed in the amount of \$ _____ (Make check payable to Wright & Co.) or Charge my payment to: (Circle Credit Card) Visa/Mastercard on an (Circle One):

Annual Semi-annual Quarterly basis.

Card # _____ Expiration: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Fax this form to 202/289-1399 or mail to Wright & Co. 1400 Eye Street, NW, Suite #1100, Washington, DC 20005

If you have any questions or wish to pay by EFT (automatic monthly bank draft) or payroll allotment, please call 202/842-3894 or toll free 888/41-CSEBA to request the proper forms.

REQUEST FOR APPLICATIONS FOR AIDS RESEARCH PROJECTS – Steve Akiyama, Ph.D.

Due to recent changes in the NIEHS AIDS research portfolio and in response to requests we have received, the DIR has decided to solicit formally proposals for new intramural AIDS Research Projects. Proposals must be for new projects only, and may be submitted only by tenured or tenure-track Principal Investigators/Principal Staff Scientists. Proposals for individual projects and collaborative projects involving two or more research groups will be considered. Funds can be provided to sponsor up to one post-doctoral fellow per Principal Investigator/Principal Staff Scientist, expenses up to \$12,000 per investigator, and equipment purchases for up to a three year period. All projects funded under this mechanism will be assigned a new Z01 intramural research project number and will require the submission of an annual report each year funds are received. Applications will be peer reviewed.

If you plan to apply for funds for a new AIDS research project, please send a letter of intent indicating your name, Laboratory/Branch, and a tentative title for the new project by e-mail at akiyama@niehs.nih.gov, by campus mail to Dr. Steven Akiyama, Mail Drop A2-09, or by fax at 541-5465 before March 1. The letter of intent is not required but will help us in the review and planning process.

The time frames for the AIDS Research Project review and award process are as follows:

Receipt of Letter of Intent	March 1, 1999
Receipt of Proposal	April 23, 1999
Proposals to Review Committee	May 6, 1999
Completion of Proposal Reviews	June 7, 1999
Notification of Award	July 7, 1999
Start Date of Award	October 1, 1999

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LOAN REPAYMENT PROGRAMS

When recruiting scientific staff into Federal Civil Service appointments or the Commissioned Corps, you are encouraged to discuss the possibility of their eligibility for the following three loan repayment programs for qualified educational loans:

The NIH AIDS Research Loan Repayment Program (AIDS-LRP) is designed to attract highly qualified physicians, nurses, and scientists to HIV/AIDS research and research training.

The NIH Clinical Research Loan Repayment Program (CR-LRP) is designed to recruit highly qualified physicians from disadvantaged backgrounds to serve as Clinical researchers.

The NIH General Research Loan Repayment Program (General-LRP) is designed to attract highly qualified physicians and scientists to conduct research at the NIH.

For more information on these programs, call Peggy McKinney (Ext. 1-4182) or go to the <http://lrp.info.nih.gov/default.htm>. Information and FAQs will answer many of the questions that you might have. Note the benefit has just been raised to \$35,000/year.

VISA TIME REQUIREMENTS

On June 12, 1998, the Scientific Director sent a memo to all DIR Section/Group Leaders concerning the urgent visa time requirements. The memo included the timelines and information on the responsibilities for preparing or processing the paperwork. Additional copies of the memo and attachments can be obtained from your Administrative Officer.

Unfortunately, many recruitment and renewal packages for foreign national appointments (Visiting Fellows, Visiting Associates, Visiting Scientists, Special Volunteers, and Guest Researchers) are still being received late to give adequate time to meet the required time to process the visas (4 and 5 months). The lateness of these packages is causing severe hardships. The lateness of renewal packages are most problematic since it can affect the pay of our foreign staff members.

We need you to make this a high priority in your area IMMEDIATELY. You will be held accountable if the timelines are not met.

PROCESSING TIME:

4 MONTHS for NEW Foreign National Appointments

5 MONTHS for NEW Foreign National Appointments Already Residing in the U.S.

5 MONTHS for RENEWAL Foreign National Appointments

CONFERENCE ROOM SCHEDULER CHANGES

At the February DIR Council meeting Ms. Ronda Rice, Telecommunications Manager, Office of Management, and Mr. Brian Winter, TPMC computer contractor, demonstrated the conference room scheduler. Council members made several suggestions for changes in the system, they are:

- To help avoid conflicts add an S (Seminar) or a C (Conference) on the reservation block that appears in the day at a glance display (an E for Event already appears on the reservation block). It will be mandatory to indicate whether a room reservation is for a Seminar, Conference, Event, or "Do Not List in Events."
- The "Requested By Field" will default to the "Entered By" name; the individual entering the reservation should be able to overwrite the "Requested By" name with another name if needed.
- For recurring reservations where not all dates are available, change the message from "Your Reservation Was Successful!" to "Not All of the Requested Dates Are Available; Please Review the List Below for Unsuccessful Reservations." Also, make dates that are not available flash in red on the list of recurring reservations.
- Send by e-mail every Thursday afternoon the Calendar of Scientific Events for the following week.

BREAST/PROSTATE CANCER FACULTY

The next meeting of the Breast/Prostate Cancer Faculty will be on April 20 at 1 pm, Conference Room D250. Dr. Sandi Dunn will be giving a presentation on “The National Breast Cancer Coalition Fund: Shaping the Future of Research Through Advocacy. This topic addresses the areas of cancer biology, epidemiology and clinical research. Plan to attend so that you can find out more about how breast cancer advocacy is shaping research at the National Institutes of Health.

NTP Nomination Faculty

The Nomination Faculty works with the National Toxicology Program (NTP) Liaison Office to identify, solicit and select nominations of chemicals as candidates for studies of toxicity and carcinogenicity by NTP. Nominations are solicited from the general public, the academic community, labor organizations, and other Government Agencies. The Nomination Faculty is also proactive to identify and select candidate chemicals from the universe of synthetic and naturally occurring chemicals. Chemicals nominated by all sources are the focus of a broad range of scientific expertise to review, evaluate, select and prioritize chemicals for NTP study. Faculty members also suggest areas of research considered most relevant to address data gaps for chemicals recommended for study. The Faculty serves as liaison between Programs within NIEHS to increase interaction and collaborative research among Institute scientists to improve the risk assessment process, and to develop and validate mechanistically based models for chemical toxicity. Any Institute scientist who may have a suggestion(s) for a candidate chemical or agent for NTP studies is invited to submit their suggestion(s) to Scott Masten (Ext. 1-5710 or Mail Drop B3-10).

Dr. Scott Masten is the most recent addition to the Nomination Faculty. Scott is a recent hire in the Environmental Toxicology Program (ETP) where he coordinates ETP Exposure Assessment and Nominations Faculty activities. With the Nomination Faculty, he is greatly enhancing our assessment of chemicals in need of additional study by collecting, assessing and distributing background data for promising nominations. He will also soon assume responsibility for our contract to prepare literature searches and summaries for nominations selected by the Faculty.

Recent activity by the Faculty has included a review by Drs. Burka and Matthews of a list of 764 chemicals identified as being high production (>1 million pounds/yr.), but data poor. Based on their knowledge of structure/activity relationships for chemical toxicity and carcinogenicity, 75 of the most interesting chemicals were selected for further consideration. Preliminary data packages were assembled for each chemical by Nominations Faculty and our contractor and reviewed by the full Nomination Faculty. A total of 16 chemicals were selected for preparation of full data packages and formal nomination for NTP study. A similar effort is currently underway to review the list of approximately 2900 chemicals listed by the EPA as being produced in excess of 1 million pounds/yr.

TRANSITION to INDEPENDENT POSITIONS (TIP) Program —Steve Akiyama, Ph.D.

An important element of the NIEHS mission is to develop the next generation of exceptionally talented young scientists who are committed to understanding the impact of environmental exposures on human health. Unfortunately the relative paucity of environmental health sciences-based departments has often resulted in the migration of the brightest NIEHS trainees into academic research directions outside the scope of environmental health.

The Transition to Independent Positions (TIP) Program is an innovative mechanism that fulfills critical needs by bridging young scientists into tenure-track academic positions relevant to environmental health sciences, and by helping academic institutions to identify these talented new investigators. This type of award is a unique form of research support mechanism because it provides a means for an early commitment by the NIEHS to support talented scientists in environmental health research. This award is very important to the NIEHS because it provides a potential mechanism to increase the talent pool of scientists working on problems specific to the priority research areas of the NIEHS, to assist our most talented trainees in the transition from postdoctoral trainee to an appropriate academic or research career position relevant to the mission of the NIEHS, and to help the NIEHS identify those trainees most likely to make significant contributions to the NIEHS mission. Through this very competitive award, the NIEHS fosters research in areas of high program priority, and facilitates the transition of talented young investigators into environmental health research.

The major innovative feature of the TIP Awards is its early commitment to fund the research careers of the most exceptional young scientists in the environmental health sciences. The award uses the N.I.H. Scholar Development Award (K22) mechanism to provide up to \$100,000 per year of direct research support for up to three years. The award is not made to a specific institution, but rather will be a commitment for future support of an NIEHS trainee. This unique and innovative feature of the TIP Program makes it possible for NIEHS trainees to apply for, and earn a commitment of, NIH funding before the end of the training period and before they have even found their first independent position. However, the award can **only** be initiated at an academic institution in which the principal investigator has a **tenure-track** position in a research intensive environment relevant to environmental health sciences.

To be eligible to apply for a TIP Award a DIR IRTA fellow, staff fellow, or clinical fellow must receive a competitive score for an F32 type DIR pre-application from the NIEHS Intramural TIP Review committee. All applicants must have **completed** at least eighteen (18) months of postdoctoral training prior to submission of an application and be a citizen of the United States or non-citizen national of the United States, or have been lawfully admitted to the United States for permanent residence. Applicants cannot be more than five (5) years past the Ph.D. or other professional degree at the time of application. The project cannot be an escalation or extension of the trainee's project. Rather it should be an independent, original and innovative project representing new concepts and ideas.

VACANCIES/RECRUITS

The Division of Intramural Research, NIEHS, is currently recruiting for the following positions:

- 1) Tenure-Track or Tenured Principal Investigator, Biostatistics Branch

Contact Janis Mullaney for further details